

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LUXEMB 00740 01 OF 02 221404Z
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FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5949

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 LUXEMBOURG 0740

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, BGEN, LU, US, XT

SUBJECT: WEST EUROPEAN FACTOR IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

REF. STATE 216662

1. COMPARED WITH ALMOST ALL OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, LUXEMBOURG IS AN OASIS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY. THE LIBERAL/SOCIALIST COALITION GOVERNMENT HEADED BY GASTON THORN WILL BE IN OFFICE FOR TWO MORE YEARS AND, AS OF NOW, APPEARS TO HAVE AN EXCELLENT CHANCE OF WINNING ANOTHER FIVE-YEAR TERM IN 1979.

2. IN COMPARISON WITH THE AMBIGUITIES IN PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES ELSEWHERE IN WESTERN EUROPE, LUXEMBOURG IS SOLIDLY PRO-AMERICAN. THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION THINKS OF THE UNITED STATES, IN ALMOST 1944-45 TERMS, AS LUXEMBOURG'S LIBERATOR AND GUARANTOR OF POST-WAR SECURITY. THE SMALL NEO-STALINIST LUXEMBOURG COMMUNIST PARTY IS LARGEMLY WITHOUT AN AUDIENCE BEYOND ITS OWN MEMBERS. SOCIALISTS, ALWAYS MODERATE, HAVE NEVER BEEN IN ANY SENSE HOSTILE TO OR CRITICAL OF THE UNITED STATES BUT THEY ARE EVEN MORE POSITIVE IN THIS POST-VIETNAM POST-WATERGATE

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PAGE 02 LUXEMB 00740 01 OF 02 221404Z

ERA THAN THERE WERE BEFORE. THE CHRISTIAN-SOCIALIST OPPOSITION PARTY IS MADE UP OF MODERATE TO CONSERVATIVE CATHOLICS WHOSE ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES ARE, IF ANYTHING, EVEN MORE FAVORABLE THAN THOSE OF THE LIBERALS AND SOCIALISTS.

3. GASTON THORN, THEREFORE, FACES FEW DOMESTIC CONSTRAINTS

IN COOPERATING WITH THE UNITED STATES ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. THORN, A "PROGRESSIVE LIBERAL" IN THE EUROPEAN SENSE, DOMINATES THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE WITH HIS DYNAMISM, INTELLIGENCE AND CHARISMA. AS PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER HE ENJOYS LITERALLY A FREE HAND IN SHAPING GOL FOREIGN POLICY. THORN NOT ONLY ENDORSES THE MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY GOALS OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION BUT FEELS A DEEP PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO SEVERAL OF THEM, INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RECENT INITIATIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. THERE ARE PRESENTLY NO SIGNIFICANT BILATERAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS IN U. S. LUXEMBOURG RELATIONS.

4. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SECURITY, HOWEVER, LUXEMBOURG'S MOST VITAL INTERESTS ARE SERVED BY ITS MEMBERSHIP IN THE EEC. IN MOST TRADE, AGRICULTURAL AND MONETARY DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE COMMUNITY, LUXEMBOURG TENDS TO SIDE WITH ITS EEC PARTNERS. ON UN ISSUES, HOWEVER, AND ON THE WHOLE RANGE OF ISSUES IN THE U.S./EEC PRESIDENCY DIALOGUE, LUXEMBOURG IS ALMOST INVARIABLY WITH THOSE MEMBER STATES MOST FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS U. S. POSITIONS. NOT SURPRISINGLY, WITHIN THE COMMUNITY LUXEMBOURG SIDES WITH THE SMALLER STATES IN OPPOSING A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE LARGER MEMBER STATES, AS FOR EXAMPLE AT THE RAMBOUILLET, PUERTO RICAN AND LONDON SUMMITS. ON OTHER EEC ISSUES, LUXEMBOURG IS LUKEWARD TOWARDS COMMUNITY ENLARGEMENT, STRONGLY FAVORS DIRECT ELECTION

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LUXEMB 00740 01 OF 02 221404Z

AND INCREASED POWER OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, AND FAVORS MOST OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE TINDEMANS' REPORT. ON EURO-CUMMUNISM, THORN BELIEVES THE COMMUNITY MUST CONTINUE TO WORK WITH FRENCH AND ITALIAN GOVERNMENTS OF THE LEFT WHICH INCLUDE COMMUNISTS SHOULD THEY COME TO POWER, BUT HE IS PRIVATELY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE RESILIENCE OF EEC INSTITUTIONS IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.

5. AS A "GOOD EUROPEAN" THORN IS RESENTFUL OF WHAT HE SEES AS FRENCH AND BRITISH OPPOSITION TO STRENGTHENING THE EEC AND OFTEN LOOKS TO THE FRG TO DEFEND COMMUNITY INTERESTS, ALTHOUGH HE FEELS EMOTIONALLY AND CULTURALLY MORE ATTRACTED TO FRANCE THAN TO GERMANY. THORN BELIEVES THAT HE HAS EXCELLENT PERSONAL RELATIONS WITH BOTH SCHMIDT AND GISCARD AND THAT HE CAN AT TIMES HELP RESOLVE FRANCE-GERMAN DISPUTES. HE ALSO BELIEVES THAT HIS PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND THE FACT THAT THERE IS LITTLE DIRECT LUXEMBOURG INTEREST IN MAY CONTENTIOUS ISSUES, COULD PERMIT HIM ON OCCASION TO PLAY AN INFORMAL LIAISON ROLE BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND THE UNITED STATES.

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PAGE 01 LUXEMB 00740 02 OF 02 221416Z
ACTION SP-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 L-03 SS-15 INR-07 SSO-00

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FM AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

TO SECSTATE WAHHDC 5950

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 LUXEMBOURG 0740

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6. IN ATTEMPTING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THORN'S INFLUENCE
WITHIN THE EEC, THREE FACTORS SHOULD BE BORN IN MIND:

A. THORN'S POTENTIAL INFLUENCE SHOULD NOT BE EXAGGERATED.
LUXEMBOURG IS AN HISTORIC ACCIDENT THAT SURVIVES IN THE
20TH CENTURY BY STRICTLY LIMITING ITS ENERGIES AND SCANTY
RESOURCES TO PROBLEMS WHICH TOUCH ITS VITAL INTERESTS.
NEITHER THORN NOR HIS ABLE FOREIGN MINISTRY TEAM CAN BE
EXPECTED TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE ON THE FULL RANGE OF ISSUES
OF CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES.

B. WHILE LUXEMBOURG GENUINELY FAVORS CLOSE U.S. EEC COOPERATION,
LUXEMBOURG'S OVERRIDING FOREIGN POLICY COMMITMENT IS TO
STRENGTHENING EUROPEAN UNITY. THUS, UNLESS CONFRONTED WITH
A DEVISIVE ISSUE OF SUCH OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE THAT A CHOICE
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE IS UNAVOIDABLE, LUXEMBOURG
WILL NORMALLY ATTACH GREATER IMPORTANCE TO WORKING OUT
A COMMON EEC POSITION THAN TO COOPERATING BILATERALLY WITH
THE UNITED STATES.

C. THORN IS PREPARED TO DEVOTE CONSIDERABLE TIME AND ENERGY
TO U.S. EUROPEAN RELATIONS ONLY IF HE IS CONVINCED THAT THE
UNITED STATES TAKES HIM SERIOUSLY.

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PAGE 02 LUXEMB 00740 02 OF 02 221416Z

7. BASED ON THESE CONSIDERATIONS, MY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

PURSUING OUR EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL OBJECTIVES WITH LUXEMBOURG
AREAS FOLLOWS:

A: TOP LEVEL ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SHOULD GIVE THORN
ENOUGH TIME AND ATTENTION TO CONVINCE HIM THAT HIS STATESMANSHIP
AND INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES ARE IMPORTANT TO US.

B. WE SHOULD BE SELECTIVE IN ATTEMPTING TO ENLIST THORN'S
PERSONAL SUPPORT FOR U. S. POSITIONS. LUXEMBOURG'S SIZE
AND INTERESTS PERMIT IT TO MAKE AT BEST A SYMBOLIC CON-
TRIBUTION TO NATO DEFENSE, LUXEMBOURG HAS NO REPREZNTATION
AND FEW SIGNIFICANT TIES WITH THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES,
AND LUXEMBOURG PLAYS NO DIRECT PART IN THE DALE OR PRODUCTION
OF NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL ARMS. THUS, DEFENSE, NORTH/
SOUTH RELATIONS AND ARMS CONTROL ARE EXAMPLES IN WHICH
LUXEMBOURG INFLUENCE IS LIMITED. FURTHERMORE, ON MOST OF THOSE
ISSUES LUXEMBOURG SUPPORTS U. S. POSITIONS AND VOTES WITH US
IN THE UN AND OTHER MULTINATIONAL FORA. WE SHOULD, THEREFORE,
CONTINUE TO CONSULT WITH LUXEMBOURG ROUTINELY AT APPROPRIATE
LEVELS ON SUCH ISSUES, BUT RESERVE MAJOR EFFORTS WITH THORN
TO U.S./EEC ISSUES AND A FEW OTHER GLOBAL INITIATIVES, SUCH
AS SOUTHERN AFRICA, WHERE HE HAS DIRECT PERSONAL INTEREST
OR WHERE HE CAN EXERCISE MAXIMUM LEVERAGE.

C. WE MUST RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT LUXEMBOURG'S PARAMOUNT
INTEREST IN DEVELOPING COMMON EEC FOREIGN POLICIES. IF
WE WANT THORN TO EXPLAIN OR ADVOCATE U. S. POLICIES WITHIN
THE COMMUNITY, WE WILL NEED TO CONSULT WITH HIM FREQUENTLY,
IN DEPTH AND WELL IN ADVANCE OF EEC MEETINGS--BEFORE
MEMBER STATE POSITIONS HARDEN.

8 I DO NOT MEAN TO IMPLY THAT THORN COULD OR WOULD
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PAGE 03 LUXEMB 00740 02 OF 02 221416Z

SERVE AS A SORT OF TROJAN HORSE FOR U. S. INTERESTS WITHIN
THE COMMUNITY. HE OBVIOUSLY MUST BE CONVINCED OF THE
APPROPRIATENESS OF U. S. VIEWS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES BEFORE
HE WILL SUPPORT THEM IN THE EEC OR ELSEWHERE. NOR DO I
MEAN TO SUGGEST THAT ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS NEED
TO DEVOTE AN EXCESSIVE AMOUNT OF HAND-HOLDING TIME TO
THORN. WHAT IS NECESSARY, I BELIEVE, IS THAT THE PRESIDENT
AND THE SECRETARY SEE THORN ON A LIMITED NUMBER OF
OCCASIONS--IN THE CONTEXT OF UNGA SESSIONS, OR ON THE FRINGES
OF NATO AND OECD SUMMITS. IN SUM, I BELIEVE THAT LUXEMBOURG CAN BE
USEFUL IN ADVANCING U. S. GOALS AND POLICIES IN EUROPE IF
WE INDICATE TO THE PRIME MINISTER/FOREIGN MINISTER THAT WE
TAKE HIM SERIOUSLY BUT AT THE SAME TIME USE HIM SELECTIVELY.
LOWENSTEIN

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